

As this issue of *Oryx* goes to press, the Society is about to embark on an important new phase of its development. The Council has appointed a new director and is confident that this will enable the Society to move forward and make progress in achieving its objectives. The new director, Mark Rose, takes up his full-time post in mid-October but over the past few weeks he has already started to become involved in the Society's business. A brief history of Mark's career to date is to be found on pages 250–251.

We increased the number of pages in *Oryx* by 16 in 1993 and we are pleased to be able to announce that a further 16 pages will be added in 1994. This should shorten the time that elapses between articles being submitted and published, which is good news for authors, for readers and for the editor.

We are currently considering the presentation of the Briefly section of *Oryx*. For many years now the news items in this section have been arranged on a geographical basis but many other subject-based classifications are possible and some may be more useful to readers. If you have any opinions on this, please write and let me know, suggesting too where you would like to see improved coverage of certain subjects. We are aware that our listing of meetings is not comprehensive – it depends on the editor being made aware of them rather than a deliberate attempt to survey the field. We would like to know if a list of meetings, as to be found on pages 212–213 of this issue, is useful to you, whether it would be more useful if it were more comprehensive, or whether you would prefer to do without it altogether and have the space used for something else. The FFPS is a membership-based organization and many of you have careers in conservation. We could, through the Briefly columns, publish details of career moves and important conservation initiatives you are involved in. Please let me have any details.

Readers will have noticed that book reviews have been only an occasional feature in recent past issues. One reason for this is lack of space but your responses to our questionnaire last year made us realize that most people do not value them as much as they do other aspects

of the journal. From now on we shall be dropping the book review section in its existing form, although we shall be considering alternative ways of drawing attention to the most important of new publications and giving readers guidance in additional reading suggestions on selected topics.

In future issues we would like to explore some conservation issues in more depth than has been possible in the past and perhaps produce some thematic issues of the journal. Again, your suggestions and your papers, would be welcome, although our planning shall take into account suggestions already made in your responses to the questionnaire survey.

For example, the theme of wildlife utilization is one that crops up regularly in the pages of *Oryx*: in this issue alone we touch on trade in fruit bats, wildlife utilization in Zimbabwe, controls on forestry practice, whaling, over-exploitation of sharks for cancer treatments and the fur trade in the Himalayas, to mention only a few examples. What is missing is a critical examination and overview of the whole issue.

Wildlife utilization is, of course, not a new issue. Humans have always exploited wildlife, sometimes sustainably but more often to the detriment of the species concerned. What is relatively new is that a conservation strategy is emerging that attempts to turn wildlife utilization on its head. To a large extent past conservation efforts have concentrated in attempting to ensure that exploitation of a particular species does not jeopardize its chances of survival. Such strategy was behind the formation, for example, of the Convention on Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, in which FFPS played a leading role in the 1970s. Now there is a shift: from attempts to conserve wild resources so that we can continue to use them, a new conservation strategy is emerging. It involves the actual promotion of the use of species and their habitats: a kind of 'use it or lose it' approach, which may bring more dangers than benefits in the long term. We shall look forward to exploring this and many other issues in the months to come.

*Editor*